

Roosevelt Base, Arcade
(Building No. 234)
West Virginia Street
~~Naval Base Long Beach~~
Long Beach
Los Angeles
California

HABS No. CA-2663-H

HABS
CAL
19-LONGB,
3H-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Western Region
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California 94107

HABS
CAL
19-LONG-B,
3H-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
ROOSEVELT BASE, ARCADE (Building No. 234)

HABS No. CA-2663 -H

Location: West Virginia Street, Naval Station Long Beach,
Long Beach, Los Angeles County, California

USGS Long Beach Quadrangle (7.5'), Universal Transverse Mercator
Coordinates: 11.384840.3735210

Significance: The Roosevelt Base Historic District, constructed in 1940-1943, consists of 11 buildings designed in the International Style with Mediterranean Revival detailing, five structures, and extensive historic landscaping. It is eligible for the National Register for its site planning, landscaping, and architectural style; and for its Associate Architect Paul Williams, a nationally-prominent Los Angeles Afro-American architect. Additionally, the District is significant for its association with the buildup of permanent Naval facilities on the Pacific Coast under President Franklin D. Roosevelt, during the mobilization period preceding the United States' entry into World War II.

The Arcade's concrete pillars and gable roof, combining features of the Mediterranean Revival and International Styles, functionally and visually connects the recreation group of buildings 20, 22, and 23. Except for a few alterations, the Arcade has maintained its original function and architectural integrity and beauty.

Description: Exterior. This U-shaped, one-story Arcade, measuring 15'2" x 502'2", is built on a reinforced concrete pile foundation and has a total gross floor area of 91,353 square feet. It provides a covered walkway between buildings 20, 22, and 23. The smooth concrete gable roof is covered with wood planks topped with a red rolled composition material. It has overhanging eaves, 4 feet wide.

This impressive Arcade has 72 concrete pillars, measuring 15" x 30" and spaced 12'6" apart. Visually, the pillars appear in a pleasing symmetry of 36 pairs. The pillars are of smooth concrete with a plywood form-board exposed finish. The flooring of the Arcade consists of red brick 12" x 12" tiles edged with smooth concrete. The arcade is open on the east and south sides; on the north side is a wall of wooden panels and metal gates separating the Arcade from the Swimming Pool. The Arcade's courtyard patio is of scored concrete, with six concrete planters, three on each side, measuring 6' high and 3' wide. Twelve modern pole lamps, six per side and set in the lawn, light the area.

Alterations. The original red shingle tiles have been removed from the roof. The original indirect lighting fixtures recessed in the interior walls

of the arcade's pillars have been removed, and the recessed areas have been covered with metal plates. The original torchière lights in the courtyard have been removed, and their concrete bases are now used as planter boxes. Twelve pole lights, six on each side of the patio courtyard, were installed. The wall on the north side of wooden enclosure panels and metal gates, separating the arcade from the swimming pool, was added. It is not known when these changes were made; possibly they occurred when Building 20 was enlarged in 1968-71.

Surroundings. The arcade is surrounded on the east by West Virginia Street, on the south by the Enlisted Men's Club 20, on the west by the Gymnasium 23, and on the north by the Swimming Pool 233 and Fitness Center 22.

Historical Context: The Arcade was built in 1942 at the cost of \$29,600. Its construction was part of a plan to provide recreational and administrative facilities for the Pacific Fleet anchored in San Pedro Harbor. The construction of this complex was part of a nation-wide military effort to replace deteriorating World War I temporary buildings with new permanent facilities to attract and retain post-war peacetime forces. Rather than using a standard design from the Bureau of Yards and Docks, the Navy, through Allied Engineers, hired local civilian architects Adrian Wilson and Paul R. Williams. As a result the buildings, designed in the International Style with Mediterranean Revival details, are unique to the Base.

Construction of this complex, named Roosevelt Base, took place between 1940 and 1943, and cost \$18 million, funded by Congressional appropriations. Included were the gymnasium (23), squash/handball courts and locker rooms (22), a swimming pool (233), tennis courts (221), arcade (234), lounge and bowling alley (20), officers' club (24), fleet landing building (10), administration building (1), dispensary (2), fire station (3), central heating plant (4), labor board building (41), gatehouse (40), main gates (gate 1), a net pier (pier 7, structure 126), and extensive landscaping.

Although designed in 1940 as recreation facilities for personnel of the Pacific Fleet, the complex was not used initially for this purpose. In response to Japan's increasing belligerence toward China, President Roosevelt, (for whom the Base was named) ordered the fleet from San Pedro Bay to Pearl Harbor, Oahu, Hawaii to serve as a deterrence and warning. After the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, the Base was rushed to completion: new temporary barracks were constructed, and the facilities were used during World War II as support for a Small Craft Training Center and as the administrative center of the Naval Operating Base in Long Beach.

After World War II the facilities, renamed Naval Station Long Beach, were used to support the U.S. Navy ships' personnel either homeported in Long Beach or in drydock for repairs at the adjacent Naval Shipyard. In 1991 the Naval Station was listed for closure as part of the national Base Re-Use and Closure activities as the Department of Defense downsized with the end of the Cold War. In 1994 the Base officially closed, although a number of buildings are still in use.

Sources:

A microfilm copy of an architectural drawing: #1248-34-214, May 15, 1941, is located at Building 20, Naval Facilities Engineering Command Center, Port Hueneme, California.

Archiplan Urban Design Collaborative. 1987. *Terminal Island Long Beach Naval Complex, Long Beach, California: Update of Engineering Evaluation for Naval Station: Long Beach, California*. Revised April 1988, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Long Beach Naval Station. Contract N624-86-C-5263.

Manley, William, Carson Anderson, and Susan M. Hector. 1994. *Historical and Architectural Assessment - Naval Station Long Beach, Long Beach, California*. San Diego, California. Contract Number N68711-92-M-4893.

Property Record Card: NAV. S. and A. Form 277

"Roosevelt Naval Base, Terminal Island: Headquarters of The Naval Operating Base, Terminal Island, Long Beach Harbor." 1944. *Architectural Record* May: 58-70.

Todd Erickson. Interview with Alexandra C. Cole, 29 March 1996, Naval Station Long Beach, Long Beach, California.

Project Information: This HABS documentation project was undertaken as a mitigative recording required by the Memorandum of Agreement, dated _____ 1996, signed by the City of Long Beach, the California State Preservation Officer and the Navy. The Navy proposes to transfer the Naval Station property to the City of Long Beach. The City, through the Port of Long Beach, plans to demolish all the buildings and structures on Roosevelt Base for a container terminal.

The documentation was prepared by Alexandra C. Cole, SAIC, Santa Barbara, architectural historian and Fermina B. Murray, historian, in May 1996. Large-format photography was done by William B. Dewey of Santa Barbara, California, in April 1996.